

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

**RONALD J. TENPAS
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**

Nine Executive Drive, Fairview Heights, Illinois 62208, Telephone (618) 628-3700

For Immediate Release

MARCH 17, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 17, 2004, **MICHAEL WAYNE HEMBREE**, age 35, of 4413 Jackson Highway, West Lafayette, IN 47906, was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury sitting in East St. Louis, Illinois in a three (3) count indictment charging him with robbing the postal mistress in charge of the Annapolis, Illinois, Post Office of United States property in her custody, of knowingly and forcibly assaulting the postal mistress in the course of her being employed by the United States Postal Service, and with using a firearm during and in relation to his committing a crime of violence by robbing said post office, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 111(a)(1), 924(c)(1), and 2114(a). The violation took place August 22, 2003, in Crawford County, Illinois. *An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.*

HEMBREE is currently confined in federal custody having been additionally indicted for federal bank robbery charges in Central Illinois and in the State of Tennessee. His case will be docketed for trial in Federal Court in Benton, Illinois. His trial date has not been scheduled.

The indictment alleges that **MICHAEL WAYNE HEMBREE**, on August 22, 2003, in Annapolis, Illinois, Crawford County, did rob Sybil J. Newlin, the acting postal mistress of the Annapolis, Illinois, Post Office of United States postal money in her care and custody. In the course of the robbery, **MICHAEL WAYNE HEMBREE** sprayed Sybil J. Newlin in the face and eyes with pepper spray. **HEMBREE** also threatened Sybil J. Newlin with a sawed off shot gun in the course of the robbery.

Defendant **HEMBREE** was arrested on December 3, 2003, in the Nashville, Tennessee area and is charged federally with bank robbery of a bank in the Nashville, Tennessee area. Additional investigation led to **HEMBREE** being charged federally with four additional bank robberies of banks located in Central Illinois.

The investigation of the Annapolis, Illinois, **HEMBREE** matter is being conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Crawford County Sheriff's Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas M. Daly.